

**AMERICAN CITIZENS SERVICES**  
**American Citizens Services Newsletter**

**U.S. CONSULATE GENERAL MELBOURNE, AUSTRALIA**  
**July/August 2009**

This periodic email newsletter is a service to U.S. citizens who live in or are travelling through the consular district of the U.S. Consulate General Melbourne, which comprises the States of Victoria, Tasmania, South Australia and the Northern Territory. Through this American Citizens Services newsletter, the Consular Section highlights information pertaining to consular procedures, policies, and other topics of general interest to U.S. citizens who have registered with the American Citizens Services (ACS) Unit and provided an email address. If you believe others would benefit from receiving this newsletter, please forward it to them and encourage them to subscribe. To subscribe to our periodic newsletter and receive other updates, please register online by following this link:  
<https://travelregistration.state.gov/ibrs/>.

If you do not wish to receive this periodic newsletter, or would like to be removed from our email list, please email us at [MelbourneACS@state.gov](mailto:MelbourneACS@state.gov).

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## CONSULAR SECTION COMING TO ADELAIDE, DARWIN & HOBART in SEPTEMBER 2009

U.S. Consulate General consular personnel plan to travel to Adelaide, Darwin and Hobart to provide routine American Citizen Services in mid to late September for the last time this U.S. fiscal year. Due to the uncertainty over when the U.S. Federal Government will have a new budget after October 1, we cannot guarantee when another consular outreach trip may occur prior to 2010. U.S. citizens who wish to renew children's passports, apply for first-time adult passports, register children, and otherwise receive consular services that normally require U.S. citizens to appear in person at the Consulate should contact us at [MelbourneACS@state.gov](mailto:MelbourneACS@state.gov) if they have not done so already to make an appointment. In your email please include the type of service requested, the age of each applicant, a contact number and your location. Please register your interest as soon as possible to secure a place. We will post on the Web site specific dates and locations for this outreach once those are confirmed.

## AMERICAN CITIZEN SERVICES, MELBOURNE — PUBLIC HOURS

The American Citizens Services (ACS) section in Melbourne earlier this year changed our public hours to better accommodate U.S. citizens seeking services after school hours and/or in the afternoons. Please note that these services are by appointment only; appointments must be made on line at <http://melbourne.usconsulate.gov/consular/acs/appointments.html>. Exceptions to this rule include genuine emergencies, such as travel for a death in the family or for bushfire victims seeking replacement U.S. passports.

The current public hours for Melbourne ACS are as follows:

### Counter Service hours (**by appointment only**)

- Monday: 9:00 am — 12:00 noon & 12:30 pm — 3:30 pm
- Tuesday: 12:30 pm — 3:30 pm
- Wednesday: 9:00 am — 12:00 noon & 12:30 pm — 3:30 pm
- Thursday: 12:30 pm — 3:30 pm
- Friday: 12:30 pm — 3:30 pm

### Telephone Service hours

- Monday — Thursday: 9:00 am — 12:00

Please note that the Consulate General is closed on certain [U.S. and local holidays](#) and the first Wednesday of every month.

If you have any questions in relation to our new hours please direct them to [MelbourneACS@state.gov](mailto:MelbourneACS@state.gov).

## **FILING IMMIGRANT VISA PETITIONS FOR YOUR SPOUSE OR CHILD**

The U.S. Consulate General in Melbourne periodically accepts appointments for U.S. citizens seeking to file petitions for their spouse or child to move permanently to the U.S. Those petitions are then sent to the U.S. Consulate General in Sydney for adjudication and further processing, including scheduling of appointments. Interested persons should email the Visa Unit at [MelbourneNIV@state.gov](mailto:MelbourneNIV@state.gov) to receive updates on when we are scheduling such appointments. For further information on U.S. immigrant visa procedures in Australia, please consult the Mission Australia Web site at <http://canberra.usembassy.gov/consular/visas/iv/file.html>.

## **INTERNET CORRESPONDENT IN TROUBLE? SPOTTING POTENTIAL SCAMS**

The U.S. Consulate General in Melbourne regularly receives emails and/or queries concerning Internet requests for assistance from persons whose bona fides are not clear. To assist U.S. citizens receiving similar correspondence, we provide the following information from the Department of State [travel.state.gov](http://travel.state.gov) Web site:

The Consular Affairs Bureau receives daily calls about international scams involving Internet Dating, Inheritance, Work Permits, Overpayment, and Money-Laundering. Many scams are initiated through the Internet; victims range in age from 18 to 81 and come from all socio-economic backgrounds.

If you feel you have been a victim of an Internet scam, please consult our consular publications for help and send all direct reports of Internet fraud to the Federal Bureau of Investigation at: <http://www.ic3.gov/>. If the scam originated through a particular website, notify the administrators of that website. If you are concerned about an American in distress overseas, but you are not sure if it is a legitimate case, call our office of Overseas Citizens Services at 888-407-4747 (from overseas: 202-501-4444).

- [Resources for Victims of International Financial Scams](#)
- [International Financial Scams Brochure](#) - for information on Internet Dating, Inheritance, Work Permits, Overpayment, and Money-Laundering
- [Russia Internet Dating Schemes](#) - for information on scams involving Internet dating from Russia
- [Spanish Lottery Scam](#)
- [Help for American Victims of Crime Overseas](#)

## **INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE (IRS) FORMS ON LINE**

Internal Revenue Service (IRS) tax forms for preparing annual tax returns are available online at <http://www.irs.gov/formspubs/index.html>. Publication 4732, Federal Tax Information for U.S. Taxpayers Living Abroad, is also available in limited supplies at the U.S. Consulate General or on the Web at <http://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p4732.pdf>.

Please note that the Consular Section cannot provide U.S. taxpayer assistance, specifically in preparing tax returns. We also do not stock or provide tax forms given that those are now available on line. Rather, all queries should be directed to the IRS using the information at [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov). For more information on US taxation, you

may wish to consult the Mission Australia Web site at <http://sydney.usconsulate.gov/consular/acs/money/irs.html>.

### **BRING YOUR OWN PHOTOCOPIES OR PAY THE FEES**

We wish to remind all of our American Citizen Services clients that as announced in our January newsletter and posted on the Mission Australia Consular Services Web site, photocopies as well as the original supporting documents have to be submitted with all applications for passports, Consular Reports of Birth Abroad, Social Security Numbers and federal benefits. We can photocopy the documents for you; however, this service incurs a fee of US\$1.00 per page.

### **AVIAN INFLUENZA – BE PREPARED!**

The Department of State remains concerned about the possibility that Avian Influenza may affect U.S. citizens overseas and provides extensive information on how U.S. citizens may prepare and protect themselves against the global disease. This includes an Avian Influenza Fact Sheet, [http://travel.state.gov/travel/tips/health/health\\_1181.html](http://travel.state.gov/travel/tips/health/health_1181.html). Additional information may be available at [www.travel.state.gov](http://www.travel.state.gov).

### **ON-LINE APPOINTMENT SERVICE FOR AMERICAN CITIZEN SERVICES**

Effective November 5, 2007, all American Citizen Services require an appointment. The appointment system allows Americans requiring services to schedule their appointment times in advance, allowing for a greater flexibility of services and reduced waiting periods. Please book now for appointments over the next two months. Americans are strongly encouraged to take advantage of this new service by booking their appointment online from the relevant service page at [Melbourne.usconsulate.state.gov](http://melbourne.usconsulate.state.gov). If your service does not require a personal appearance, you will be instructed on how to apply through the mail. For further details, please consult our Web site at <http://melbourne.usconsulate.gov/consular/acs.html>.

### **AMERICAN COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS**

For the reference of U.S. citizens in or traveling through Australia, and without endorsing or recommending any specific club or organizations, the U.S. Mission in Australia maintains a list of clubs and/or organizations relevant to U.S. citizens. That list is available at <http://melbourne.usconsulate.gov/consular/americanorg.html>.

### **TRAVEL INFORMATION**

The Department of State publishes Country Specific Information Sheets, Travel Alerts, and Travel Warnings for places throughout the world. For the most current information published by the Department of State, including World Wide Caution announcements, please go directly to [www.travel.state.gov](http://www.travel.state.gov). To receive this information automatically, please register through the Internet-Based Registration System (IBRS) at <https://travelregistration.state.gov/ibrs>.

## USEFUL WEB SITES AND TELEPHONE NUMBERS

The following Web sites and telephone numbers are provided for the reference of U.S. citizens, without endorsing or recommending any organization. The U.S. Consulate General does not accept responsibility for the contents of these sites nor the information provided by these offices.

- \* Domestic Violence (24 hours): 1-800-65-6463 (toll free)
- \* Rape Counseling: <http://www.casa.org.au> in Melbourne, <http://www.yarrowplace.sa.gov.au/> in Adelaide, <http://www.sass.org.au/> in Tasmania, <http://www.rubyqaea.org.au/> in Darwin.
- \* For information on Australian visas: contact the Australian Department of Immigration & Multicultural Affairs (DIMIA) at [www.immi.gov.au](http://www.immi.gov.au).
- \* To obtain Australian birth/death/marriage certificates for all Australian states, visit [www.bdm.nsw.gov.au](http://www.bdm.nsw.gov.au).
- \* For questions concerning U.S. customs rules and regulations, check out the U.S. Customs website at [www.cbp.gov](http://www.cbp.gov).
- \* For information about taking your pet to the U.S., please consult the Animal Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) website at [www.aphis.usda.gov](http://www.aphis.usda.gov). You should also contact directly the airline/shipping company you plan to use in order to make arrangements and any required reservations in advance.
- \* Social Security Administration: For the latest in social security information, go to [www.ssa.gov](http://www.ssa.gov) for news and announcements.
- \* Veterans Administration: Obtain up-to-date information about entitlements to VA benefits at [www.va.gov](http://www.va.gov). For VA Education Benefits, go to [www.gibill.va.gov](http://www.gibill.va.gov).
- \* Internal Revenue Service: For tax forms and other timely information, go to [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov).

## UPCOMING HOLIDAYS AND CONSULATE CLOSURES

For a list of upcoming holidays and Consulate General closures, please consult our Web site at <http://usembassy-australia.state.gov/holidays.html>. The U.S. Embassy in Canberra has published the following schedule of public holidays and Consulate General closures in 2009:

<b>Mission Australia</b> Public Holidays for 2009			
<b>Public Holiday</b>	<b>Country</b>	<b>Observed By</b>	<b>Date Observed</b>
Labor Day	U.S.	All posts	Monday, September 7, 2009
Queen's Birthday	Australia	Perth only	Monday, September 28, 2009
Labor Day	Australia	Canberra, Sydney only	Monday, October 5, 2009
Columbus Day	U.S.	All posts	Monday, October 12, 2009
Melbourne Cup Day	Australia	Melbourne only	Tuesday, November 3, 2009
Family and Community Day	Australia	Canberra only	Tuesday, November 3, 2009

Veterans Day	U.S.	All posts	Wednesday, November 11, 2009
Thanksgiving Day	U.S.	All posts	Thursday, November 26, 2009
Christmas Day	U.S./Australia	All posts	Friday, December 25, 2009
Boxing Day	Australia	All posts	Monday, December 28, 2009
New Year's Day	U.S./Australia	All posts	Friday, January 1, 2010

This newsletter is published by the American Citizens Services Unit, U.S. Consulate General, Melbourne, e-mail: MelbourneACS@state.gov; website: <http://melbourne.usconsulate.gov>. Effective November 5, 2007, all non-emergency services by online appointment only at <http://melbourne.usconsulate.gov/consular/acs/appointments.html>.